

# DRAFT

## MEMORANDUM

May XX, 2017

**TO: Members of the Board of Trustees**

**FROM: Nancy L. Zimpher, Chancellor**

**SUBJECT: SUNY TeachNY Policy on Educator Preparation**

### Action Requested

The proposed resolution approves SUNY TeachNY Policy on Educator Preparation.

### Resolution

I recommend that the Board of Trustees adopt the following resolution:

Whereas the State University of New York is the nation's largest comprehensive public higher education system and is a recognized leader in educator preparation, preparing nearly a quarter of New York State's teachers and thousands of other educators practicing as teachers, school and district leaders, and educational researchers and experts across the country and around the world; and

Whereas Section 351 of New York State Education Law defines the mission of SUNY: to "provide the people of New York educational services of the highest quality, with the broadest possible access, fully representative of all segments of the population"; and

Whereas SUNY holds itself to high standards—standards that exceed State, Federal, and accrediting body requirements; and

Whereas SUNY's commitment to excellence in educator preparation is part of its very foundation and continues to this day through daily practices and innovative policies, such as *A New Vision for Teacher Education*, established in 2001; and

Whereas through the SUNY Teacher and Leader Education Network (S-TEN), launched in 2012, SUNY demonstrated its ability to create regional networks of partners to support educational renewal and excellence in meeting the needs of today's learners; and

Whereas the SUNY Board of Trustees' Resolution 2013-058, (September 18, 2013), charged SUNY with implementing the recommendations of the *New NY Education*

Reform Commission with respect to rigorous admissions requirements and extensive clinical experiences; and

Whereas in 2014, Chancellor Nancy L. Zimpher convened the TeachNY Advisory Council, a group of state and national experts and education leaders, to develop recommendations for SUNY's and New York State's consideration to further support sustained excellence in educator preparation; and

Whereas upon the release of the TeachNY Advisory Council's *Report of Findings and Recommendations* on May 18, 2016, SUNY Chancellor Nancy L. Zimpher in partnership with New York State Education Department Commissioner MaryEllen Elia launched a public campaign to lift up the teaching profession and engage stakeholders throughout New York State; and

Whereas the SUNY Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor was charged to convene the Steering Committee on SUNY TeachNY Policy to examine SUNY's existing educator preparation policy, *A New Vision for Teacher Education*, and develop recommendations for a renewed, enabling policy framework and action agenda; and

Whereas the Provost's Steering Committee's work has been informed by the recommendations of the TeachNY Advisory Council, ideas from educators across New York State convened through a series of regional P–20 gatherings, and refined by the Steering Committee's collective experience and expertise; now, therefore, be it

Resolved that the SUNY Board of Trustees authorizes the State University of New York to adopt *SUNY TeachNY Policy* which affirms the following **core principles for educator preparation**:

- Recognizing that teacher quality is the number one in-school factor in student academic success, the preparation and support of, and universal access to, excellent teachers who inspire all students to learn and positively contribute to a democratic society are shared priorities and responsibilities
- Teachers, school/district leaders, and higher education faculty are part of one profession of educators—a community of practitioners and scholars who take pride in and responsibility for their practice, holding themselves accountable for the principles and standards of the profession
- Entry into the education profession entails study that is academically rigorous, content rich, multidisciplinary, informed by research, and clinically based, preparing candidates to apply beginning expertise in the science and art of teaching and learning
- Educator preparation and the full continuum of professional advancement—from novice through expert—are embedded in collaborative endeavors supported by

the entire academic community and occurring through intentional, integrated, and mutually beneficial clinical partnerships that are well-resourced

- Educator preparation is complex and dynamic, evolving in response to knowledge gained through research and professional practice, across varied teaching and learning contexts, thereby requiring regulatory and policy environments that enable and encourage experimentation and innovation
- A collaboratively developed valid, reliable, and secure data-rich environment is essential to excellence and continuous improvement in educator preparation and practice
- SUNY colleges and universities share common educator preparation and professional advancement goals, but exercise flexibility in recognition of the diverse and distinctive histories and missions of each campus and the communities with which they engage; and, be it further

Resolved that the SUNY *TeachNY Policy framework*—organized around the themes of Excellent Candidates, Excellent Educator Preparation, Excellent Professional Support, and Demonstrating Excellence—calls on campuses to address the following **key areas**:

### 1. Excellent Candidates

- SUNY educator preparation programs are constructed to develop and support the professional identities of their candidates to become teachers and school/district leaders positioned to contribute to the enhancement of the profession
- SUNY educator preparation programs maintain high standards for each candidate's admission—including a minimum GPA of 3.0 or top third of class, or comparable record of accomplishment—consistent with requirements described in professional accreditation standards; local admissions standards include multiple measures of readiness that provide for individual-level flexibility articulated through well-designed campus policies and procedures
- SUNY colleges and universities promote entry of a diverse and talented pool of prospective educators through development and implementation of an intentional recruitment and access plan within their campuses, through joint efforts with other campuses, and in collaboration with alumni and P-12 partners, as well as their broader communities, all of which strengthen the quality and diversity of their respective enrollments
- SUNY colleges and universities, with support from SUNY, work with regional advisory boards to assess employment needs in the education sector and to provide timely and actionable information to prospective teacher and school/district leader candidates regarding P-12 educator supply and demand

## 2. Excellent Educator Preparation

- SUNY educator preparation programs incorporate clinical experiences throughout the curriculum in a manner that scaffolds candidate learning in the context of professional practice and provides for opportunities to learn across a range of educational settings, with diverse P-12 students, and at significant points of transition throughout the full school year (including the essential foundational work that occurs at the beginning of the school year) by employing campus-based laboratories, simulation, and cross-campus exchanges as a means to augment that which is not readily available in the communities near a particular campus
- SUNY educator preparation programs culminate in a set of diverse immersive clinical experiences, ideally over a full school year; such experiences may include affiliations with residency programs, professional development schools, the SUNY Urban Teacher Education Center, and other significant partnerships
- SUNY colleges and universities leverage resources within their campuses and across the system through collaborative educator preparation programming such as interdisciplinary programs within campuses, articulation agreements between campuses, and registered multi-award (e.g., associates-bachelor's or bachelor's-master's) or multi-institution (i.e., jointly registered) programs
- SUNY educator preparation programs are purposeful in their selection of school-based educators, who work in concert with the college/university-based educators in the construction, implementation, and assessment of the program; clinical faculty appointments are expanded as a means to explicitly bridge P-12 and higher education, and, where possible, joint P-12 and higher education appointments are enacted

## 3. Excellent Professional Support

- SUNY colleges and universities promote and facilitate exchanges of teachers, school/district leaders, and higher education faculty to foster simultaneous renewal through interconnected professional practice and research
- SUNY educator preparation programs actively engage with P-12 partners in the development and support of induction programs for new teachers and school/district leaders
- SUNY educator preparation programs incorporate the foundational concepts of teacher leadership (such as National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, New York State Master Teacher Program, national Writing Project) within initial and advanced level programs, as a means to build awareness of and support for professional advancement

#### 4. Demonstrating Excellence

- SUNY educator preparation programs provide candidates with substantial experience in assessment design and analysis of student learning data to inform decisions of professional practice
- SUNY educator preparation programs create networks across campuses and with practicing P-12 educators, including their own alumni, to support and improve program assessment practices
- SUNY collaborates with partners to support the development and appropriate distribution of data to foster evidence-based decision making; and, be it further

Resolved that the president of each campus with an educator preparation program shall provide to the SUNY Chancellor a plan with measurable goals that address these core principles and key areas; each campus must have an approved plan completed by May 2018 with updates provided periodically thereafter; and, be it further

Resolved that the president of each SUNY campus shall address their role in educator preparation as part of their respective campus strategic planning efforts and performance management system updates; and, be it further

Resolved that the Chancellor and Provost will work with leadership, faculty, staff, and others on SUNY campuses to implement SUNY TeachNY Policy on Educator Preparation, through the formation of campus-specific interdisciplinary collaborations and system-wide structures that promote shared responsibility and accountability for educator preparation, and shall report periodically to the Board of Trustees any additional steps that may be needed to ensure the successful implementation of this resolution.

#### **Background**

The State University of New York has a proud history of educator preparation<sup>1</sup> and continues to regard educator preparation as an essential element of its service to New York State residents. With the inception of SUNY in 1948, State teachers colleges, which originated as State-supported normal schools, formed the largest single sector in the system.

By the end of the twentieth century, SUNY had grown to its current 64-campus size, including 30 community colleges where an increasing number of undergraduates begin

---

<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of this resolution, educator preparation is defined as a program that leads to a recommendation for the issuance of a P-12 teacher certificate or a certificate in P-12 school/district leadership

their post-secondary studies<sup>2</sup>. Today, SUNY is a leader in the supply of P-12 educators within New York State and across the country. SUNY is also a significant contributor to the advancement of the profession through its supports for practicing educators and its research on teaching and learning.

Sixteen SUNY campuses<sup>3</sup> have undergraduate and/or graduate programs leading to a recommendation for the issuance of a New York State teacher or leader certificate. And all SUNY campuses contribute to educator preparation through their education of students who explore various disciplines to gain knowledge and experience along their path toward the professions of teaching and/or educational leadership, as well as through their education of practicing educators who return to institutions of higher education for further study in their fields.

*A New Vision in Teacher Education*, implemented in 2001, is the current SUNY policy for educator preparation. Since its implementation, there have been significant shifts in the context of educator preparation. For example, New York State has adopted a number of regulations that mirror aspects of *New Vision*, professional accreditation<sup>4</sup> is now a regulatory requirement, and there have been, and continue to be, changes in public policy regarding P-12 education.

Given the dynamic landscape and acknowledging the important role that policy plays in sustaining positive change and supporting excellence, in 2014 SUNY initiated discussions with the New York State Education Department (NYSED) to enter into a partnership to review existing educator preparation policies; this gave rise to TeachNY. Recognizing SUNY's reach and ability, and the leadership of SUNY Chancellor Nancy L. Zimpher, NYSED provided a Race to the Top grant to SUNY to fund this policy exploration.

The TeachNY initiative is a multi-phase collaborative effort to lift up and better support the education profession. Phase one began in 2014 with the convening of the TeachNY Advisory Council, a group of state and national leaders who met throughout the 2014-15 academic year, and culminated in the release of the *TeachNY Advisory Council Report of Findings and Recommendations* on May 18, 2016. This date signaled the conclusion of the first phase of TeachNY and the start of the second, which itself had multiple goals.

One goal of phase two was the development of SUNY policy to replace *New Vision*. To this end, the Provost's Steering Committee on SUNY TeachNY Policy was convened

---

<sup>2</sup> Approximately 40% of SUNY bachelor's degree earners started their post-secondary studies at a SUNY community college

<sup>3</sup> University Centers: Albany, Binghamton, Buffalo, and Stony Brook; Comprehensive Colleges: Buffalo State, Brockport, Cortland, Empire State, Fredonia, Geneseo, New Paltz, Old Westbury, Oneonta, Oswego, Plattsburgh, and Potsdam

<sup>4</sup> All SUNY colleges and universities have achieved successful accreditation through the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education or the Teacher Education Accreditation Council, with two having recently achieved accreditation via the newly organized Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation

during the summer of 2016 and charged with reviewing existing SUNY educator preparation policy and making recommendations for new policy. The Committee was broadly representative of SUNY, both in terms of campuses involved and positions within these campuses, including presidents, provosts, deans and faculty from schools of education and arts and sciences, professional staff (field experiences administrators and teacher certification officers), and faculty and student governance; additionally, the Committee had representation from P-12 schools and various units within SUNY.

The other goal of phase two, a close examination of New York State educator preparation practice, policy, and law, led to the creation of the TeachNY Roundtable, a group of leaders from a range of statewide organizations who were jointly convened by the SUNY Chancellor and NYSED Commissioner. This effort focused on aspects of educator preparation that extend beyond SUNY and require multi-organizational supports to enact change.

Informing both the Steering Committee and the Roundtable was a listening tour held throughout the State beginning soon after the release of the *TeachNY Advisory Council Report*. There were small-scale gatherings of various constituent groups and large-scale regional engagement sessions, with the latter held at six SUNY campuses (Cortland, University at Buffalo, Geneseo, Old Westbury, Empire State College, Plattsburgh) and one held at The City College of New York in partnership with the City University of New York, with nearly 1,000 participants in total representing P-12 and higher education. At each session, NYSED was an essential partner, with the Commissioner, Senior Deputy Commissioner, and Deputy Commissioner of Higher Education as active participants. From these sessions, participant ideas were generated, captured, and then used as a significant source of data to inform both the Provost Steering Committee and the Roundtable.

In order to develop the draft SUNY TeachNY Policy on Educator Preparation, the Steering Committee met face-to-face as a whole on three occasions. To structure their work more effectively, the full group was split into four workgroups, each of which was organized around a theme that structured the *TeachNY Advisory Council Report*: Excellent Candidates, Excellent Educator Preparation, Excellent Professional Support, and Demonstrating Excellence. Each workgroup had two co-leads who were not only instrumental in the broader work of the Steering Committee, but also worked more extensively as part of the Integration Team that developed this draft resolution. Through their leadership, the core principles and the framework of key areas of this resolution emerged. As a whole, the process was designed to be consultative and iterative, with much deliberation toward the final resolution.

Upon adoption of this resolution, the third phase of TeachNY will begin for SUNY, which is implementation of the core principles and key areas of the framework, as well as continued refinement of our policy on educator preparation.

This policy builds on the trajectory of excellence of educator preparation within SUNY and is intended to carry SUNY forward into the mid-21<sup>st</sup> century.